



Water Resources Division's Aquatic Invasive Species of the Week!

FOR THE WEEK OF:

August 5-11, 2013

New Zealand Mudsnail

Potamopyrgus antipodarum

Origin: New Zealand

Also known as: Jenkin's spire shell

Current Distribution: First discovered in Idaho in the 1980s. Then spread throughout the west. Found in Lake Michigan near Chicago, Lake Erie northwest of Cleveland, and in Duluth-Superior Harbor. Not currently found in Michigan.

Means of Introduction: Unknown how it was first established, although ballast water is the likely culprit. Mudsnaills also can invade new waters by attaching to fishing gear, boats, and trailers.

Description: Very small! It is an average of 1/8 of an inch long. The shell is brown, cone shaped with five whirls.

Habitat: Can be found in all types of aquatic habitats. The mudsnail has also been observed surviving days out of water. So cleaning recreational equipment is crucial in preventing their spread!

Impacts: Abundant populations could potentially outcompete native species for food. May have an impact on higher levels in the food chain.

Interesting Note: Self-reproducing females make up 95% of their population and give birth to well-developed clones.

It only takes one mudsnail to start a new invasion!



Photo: U.S. Geological Survey



Close up photo of the New Zealand Mudsnail. Photo: Colorado Parks & Wildlife

For more information on the New Zealand mudsnail, visit the U.S. Geological Survey's website: www.nas.er.usgs.gov